**Introduction to Language 1**
(Intro. to Lang. 1)
Course for the 2nd-Year-English-B.Ed. students,
Of the year 2014-2015, 1st semester 2014-2015,
Department of English,
Zabid-College of Education,
Hodeidah University
By: Dr. Abdullah Shaghi

The course **Introduction to Language 1** aims at developing the Yemeni students' awareness of how the English Language as a foreign language in Yemen (especially in Tihamah of Yemen, Zabid city, Zabid College of Education, Hodeidah University) is structured and operates. The Yemeni students will study some important terms and facts about language in general and especially English and Arabic.

## Course Description

The course provides an introduction to the scientific study of language in general, concentrating particularly on the structure of Standard English and some aspects of Standard Arabic structure. It explores the properties of the human language that make it unique and uniquely powerful in studying the human mind the characteristics of human language that make different from the animal communication. Also, the course examines some introductory aspects of the sounds of English as well as Arabic and their patterns (phonetics and phonology), since the course so-called **'Phonetics and Phonology of English'** will be studied in the 3rd year, 1st semester. Some differences between English and Arabic in Phonetics and Phonology will also be examined.

The aspects of language with the English words as well as some Arabic words

(Morphology), sentences (Syntax) and meanings (Semantics) will be, by Allah willing/if Allah wills, dealt with in the '**Introduction to Language 2,** course in the 2<sup>nd</sup>semester 2014-2015. It also examines how people learn languages with a focus on English (language acquisition) and how linguistic knowledge is applied in social situations (sociolinguistics).

## Course Requirements

Mid-term Exam:           % 45

Final Exam:              % 105

## Examinations

There will be TWO examinations. The Mid-term examination will focus primarily on the material which has been covered since the beginning seven weeks of the study of this course. The final examination will be given during the final examination period.

## Participation and Attendance

Participation includes regular attendance, preparation of class materials and readings, and active contribution. Think about what you are learning, and be ready to participate when you come to class. Please ask questions if you do not understand or even if you do. If you are having any problem, or if you just want to discuss specific issues see me after class. Attend class! Attendance is important to understanding the material since we will try to go beyond the textbook material in our class discussions. If you are going to miss class for a good reason, it is a good idea to let me know ahead of time if possible.

**Attendance Policy**

Only officially recognized absences will be excused. Excused absences must be recorded within one week

**What is Language?**

'What is language?' is similar to what ''life' is. Everyone knows the answer, but cannot present a comprehensive definition. The term 'language' like the term 'life' can be understood in terms of its characteristics. Different authors show different definitions of language. Linguists (= people who study language scientifically) define language in their own ways. Nevertheless, all definitions are far from satisfactory and comprehensive.

Actually, there is no single comprehensive answer to the question 'What is Language?' So, it can be said that the only answer to the question 'What is Language?' is 'Language is language.'

**Definitions of Language**

The various and common definitions of language are briefly given and explained below and next pages:

1. Language is a symbol system based on pure arbitrary conventions. Robins (1985)

According to this definition, language is a symbol system. Every written

language chooses some symbols for its chosen sounds. For example, the English sound /k/ has the symbol <k> for it, but the Arabic sound /k/ has the symbol <ك>. The alphabets of the language are formed from such symbols which are systematically joined to form meaningful words. The system of the language is purely arbitrary. This means that there is no one to one correspondence between the structure of the word and the symbols it stands for. The English combination <b.o.o.k>stands for 'a written work or composition that has been published (printed on pages bound together)'. It could not be <k.o.o.b> or <o.o.b.k>. However, the Arabic combination <ك.ت.ا.ب> stands for كتاب"a book". It could not be <ت.ب.ا.ك>or <ت.ك.ا.ب>

2. Language is purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Sapir (1921)

Language, as Sapir said, is human and non-instinctive. By human, it means only normal humans possess it. Animals do not. Animals have a communication system, but it is not developed. This is why language is considered to be species-specific and species-uniform. By non-instinctive, it means that it is not acquired and that a child has to learn the language of his/her own society. Look at the following famous language and the linguistic symbol/semiotic triangle by (de Saussure):

Language and the linguistic symbol/semiotic triangle (de Saussure):

**Thought (reference)**

**Symbol          referent/reality**
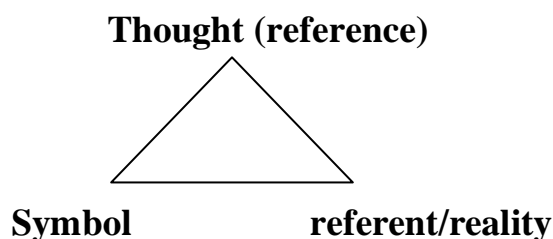
3. Language is the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols. Hall (1969)

According to this definition, Language is essentially speech produced by oral-auditory symbols. A speaker produces oral sounds of speech transmitted through the air as sound waves to the ears of the hearer who receives and conveys them to his/her brain which interprets their symbols to arrive at meaning.

4. Language is a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite to length and constructed out of a finite set of sentences. Noam Chomsky (1957)

Chomsky conveys that each sentence has a structure and human brain is competent to construct infinite different sentences from out of the finite (limited) set of sounds/symbols belonging to a particular language. And that the human brain is productive that a child can produce a sentence that has never been said or heard before.

5. A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communications. Wardaugh (1972)
6. A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. Blach and Trager (1942)

Both of these definitions point bout that language is a system. According a system, sounds join to form words. The combination <b.o.o.k> joins to form a meaningful word. But, the combinations <k.o.o.b> or <o.o.b.k> do not. Also

according to some system, words join to form sentences: 'A football is a game of wonderful entertainments' is acceptable, but a string of words like: 'A game is of a football wonderful entertainments.' is not. In this sense. Language is considered a system of systems.

7. Language is undoubtedly a kind of means of communication among human beings. Derbyshire (1967)

According to this definition, language is a completely developed means of communication among humans who can convey and receive millions of messages across the world.

**Some more definitions of language**

8. Language is a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate. Encyclopedia Britannica

9. Languages are the principal systems of communication used by particular groups of human beings within the particular society (linguistic community) of which they are members. Lyons (1970)

10. The systematic, conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression (Crystal: 1992).

11. The term 'language' can be used to refer to a variety of concepts / things, such as "the particular form of words and speech used by the

people of a country, area or social group", or "the method of human communication using spoken or written words". (source: http://grammar.about.com/od/grammarfaq/f/whatislang.htm) accessed on 20/9/2013

12. A further meaning of 'language' is "the style or types of words used by a person or group", which is a topic generally studied within sociolinguistics (the study of relation between language and society).

13. Language is generally the human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication, and a language is any specific example of such a system. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia( accessed on 20/9/2013))

14. Language is succinctly [= briefly] defined in our glossary as a "human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols." (source: http://grammar.about.com/od/grammarfaq/f/whatislang.htm) 20/9/2013

It is obviously evident from all the 14 definitions mentioned above that it is not possible to have a single comprehensive and satisfactory definition of language that shows all its characteristics.

On the basis of the aforementioned definitions, it would be better to list and discuss briefly the various characteristics of language that distinguishes the human language from the animal communication. This is given in details below:

## Human Language vs. Animal Communication

Since language is a form/mode of human communication, most linguists would undoubtedly agree that although many animals are able to communicate, they do not actually have 'language' in the sense that humans do. Birds may sing; cats may meow and purr, dogs bark and growl, apes grunt, scream and even chatter, but they are not assumed to be using these sounds in the way humans do. 'Language' is therefore a major attribute distinguishing humans from the rest of the animal kingdom.

Human language differs from the animal communication in the following 13 design characteristics/features:

1. **Interchangeability** refers to all members of the species that can send and receive messages.

2. **Feedback** refers to the users of the system who are aware of what they are transmitting.

3. **Specialization** refers to the communicative system that serves no other function but to communicate.

4. **Semanticity** refers to the system that conveys meaning through aset of fixed relationships among signifiers, referents and meaning.

5. **Arbitrariness** means that there is no natural or inherent connection/relationship between a token and its referent.

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6.   **Discreteness** refers to the communication system that consists of isolatable, repeatable units.

7.   **Displacement** refers to the users of the system that are able to refer to events remote in space and time.

8.   **Productivity** refers to the new messages on any topic that can be produced at any time.

9.   **Tradition**, **Cultural Transmission** refers to the certain aspects of the system that must be transmitted from an experienced user to a learner.

10.   **Duality of Patterning** refers to the meaningless units (phonemes) that are combined to form arbitrary signs. Signs can be recombined to form new larger meaningful units (s-p-o-tà tops, pots').

11.   **Prevarication** [=Avoidance] refers to thesystem that enables users to talk nonsense or to lie.

12.   **Learnability** refers to the user of the system that can learn other variants. Humans can learn different languages; bees are limited to their genetically specified dialect.

13.   **Reflexiveness** refers to the ability to use the communication system to discuss the system itself.

## Comparison of Animal Communication Systems with Human Language

A comparison of animal communication systems with Human Language is briefly demonstrated in the following table:

## Comparison of Animal Communication Systems with Human Language

| Features | Bees | Birds | Non-human Primates (Chimpanzees) | Humans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interchangeability | No | no | Yes | Yes |
| Semanticity | yes, very limited | yes, but limited | Yes | Yes |
| Arbitrariness | Partial | yes, but adaptive | Yes | Yes |
| Discreteness | No | yes (in songs) | Yes? | Yes |
| Displacement | Yes? | no | No | Yes |
| Productivity | yes, very limited | possibly | Possibly | Yes |
| Tradition, Cultural Transmission | No | yes, limited | Possibly | Ye |
| Learnability | No | possibly | no | Yes |
| Reflexiveness | No | no | no current evidence | Yes |

## Communication vs. Language

Communication refers to the passing on or exchange of information whereas language distinguishes what is living from what is non-living in nature. (O'Grady et al. 1996)

**Human Communication and Human Language**

**Human Communication** occurs when one person acts with the intention of influencing the mind of another, for instance, by getting him/her to entertain some idea, and when that other person recognizes the first person's intention to influence his/her mind.

Clearly, it is possible to influence another person's mind unintentionally; for example, if I (unintentionally) sneeze, I might prompt you to think that I might have a cold. However, this is a rather different kind of event than one in which I intentionally sneeze and you recognize that my sneeze was intentional.

From my first (unintentional) sneeze, you cannot infer/deduce that I am trying to get you to think I have a cold; from my second (intentional) sneeze, you can infer that I am trying to get you to think something or another, perhaps that I have a cold.

Imagine that we have gone to a party together and that we want to coordinate our leaving. So, before we get to the party I say to you, "I'll pretend to sneeze when I'm ready to go home," and you agree to interpret my sneeze in this way. When I sneeze at the party you can infer/deduce that I sneezed intentionally and interpret my sneeze as indicating my desire to leave.

For this communication to succeed, two elements must be in place: **first**, the assumption that I intend to influence you in some way, and **second**, our agreement about the meaning of my intentional sneeze. There is nothing in the nature of a sneeze that requires it to mean "Let's go home." We could have agreed that it was to mean, "It's safe to slip upstairs to steal the host's jewelry."

By specifying a meaning for a sneeze, we have created a **little code**, a sort of **minute/tiny/minuscule language**.

For the case of **Human Language**, fortunately, we cannot read each other's minds. So, if we want to allow some one access to what we are thinking, we must provide them with **clues** (slight indications) that they can perceive. Language is a system that connects thoughts, which cannot be heard, seen, or touched, with sounds, letters, manual signs, or tactile/perceptible symbols (e.g., **Braille,** the system of printing in raised dots that represents letters and numerals for the blind/sightless people) which can.

In this way, one person's private ideas may be communicated to another person. For example, imagine that I want to communicate to you my idea that my study needs to be tidied up. You can't see, hear, touch, taste, or otherwise perceive that idea; it's locked away in my mind. To communicate it to you I have to cast it in a form that you can perceive - typically in spoken, visual, or tactile form - that is systematically connected to the idea, for example, the sentence, My study needs to be tidied up. Without this perceivable expression, you cannot know that I have an idea to communicate; without the systematic connection between the idea and the form of the expression, you cannot know which idea I want to communicate. So, language is a code that systematically connects private thoughts with public expressions.

See the following source for more details:

(Gerald P. Delahunty and James Garvey, *"The English Language: from Sound to Sense"*(2010), chapter 1: Introduction to the Linguistic Study of Language, http://ar.scribd.com/doc/58702973/The-English-Language-From-Sound-to-Sense.pdf, accessed at 12:23 p.m.,on 10/2/2013 )

## Standard Language, Standard English and Standard Arabic

A **standard language** is a language variety used by a group of people in their public discourse. It is the variety of a language that is considered by its speakers to be most appropriate in formal and educational contexts. Characteristically, varieties that become standardized are the local dialects spoken in the centers of commerce and government, where a need arises for a variety that will serve more than local needs.

**Standard English** (SE) is the variety of English generally expected in formal communication in various disciplines. Standard English is the form of English acquired through education; indeed, acquisition of Standard English is a large part of what we understand as education in the English-speaking world. The spoken standard has come to be seen as a mark of good education and social prestige. It is the variety used in writing and in most formal speech

**Standard Arabic** comprises many varieties (many mutually unintelligible), that are considered a single language, because the standardized Arabic register, Literary Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic is generally intelligible / comprehensible / understandable to literate speakers who learned Literary Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic that is based upon simplified Classical Arabic, the language of the Holly Qur'an.
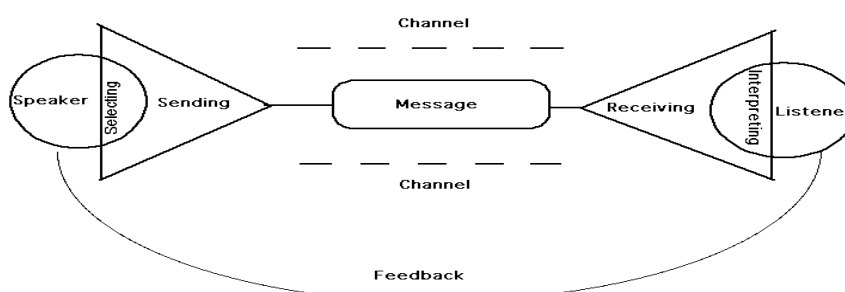
The Literary Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), al-lughah al-ʿarabiiyah al-fuṣḥaa 'the most eloquent Arabic language', is the **Standard Arabic** or the standardized  variety of Arabic used in writing and in most formal speech.

## Structure of Language

When described as a system of symbolic communication, language is conventionally seen as consisting of three parts: signs, meanings, and a code connecting signs with their meanings. How signs and meanings are combined, used, and interpreted is called 'semiotics.

Signs can be composed of sounds, gestures, letters, or symbols, depending on whether the language is spoken, signed, or written, and they can be combined into complex signs, such as words and phrases. A sign is encoded and transmitted by a sender (speaker) through a channel to a receiver (listener) who decodes it, when it is used in communication.

This is diagrammatically illustrated in the following model of communication, where, (i) the channel refers to the messages that are primarily transmitted via the vocal-auditory channel; (ii) the linearity refers to the message that is extended temporally (speech) and locally as a string (writing) and is produced and analyzed as a sequence; (iii) the redundancy refers to the same information given several times; and (iv) the feedback refers to the users of the system who are aware of what they are transmitting.



(Adapted and modified from this source: http://www.tuchemnitz.de/phil/english/chairs/linguist/independent/kursmateriali en/introlingWS0304/Intro0304X.pdf accessed on 20/9/2013)

The study of language is called '**Linguistics'** which has been developing into a science since the first grammatical descriptions of particular languages in India more than 2000 years ago. Today, linguistics is a science that concerns itself with all aspects of language, examining it from all of the theoretical/general viewpoints described above.

**Why do people study language?** This is because when people study human language, they are approaching what some might call the "human essence," the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as they know, unique to man. (Noam Chomsky, Language and Mind) Also, as native-speakers of a language, people have acquired and have been influenced by the system of their language unconsciously/instinctively.

**General Study of Language**

The general study of language is divided into the following subsystems:

1. **Phonology**, the study of speech sounds of a given language and their function within the sound system of that language.
2. **Morphology**, the study and analysis of the structure, forms and classes of words.
3. **Syntax**, the study of the arrangement of words in sentences and of the means by which such relationships are shown.
4. **Semantics**, the study of meaning in language.
5. **Pragmatics**, the study of how signs and symbols are used for communicating in a particular language.

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## Phonetics and Phonology

Here, we will only deal with and examine some aspects of the sounds of English as well as Arabic and their patterns (phonetics and phonology).

## Phonetics:

In order to produce human language sounds we use various body parts including the lips, tongue, teeth, pharynx and lungs. **Phonetics** is the term for the description and classification of speech sounds, particularly how sounds are produced, transmitted and received. In other words, Phonetics is the study of linguistic speech sounds, how they are pronounced: movement of the speech organs (articulatory), how they are perceived: hearing of speech sounds (**auditory**), and their physical aspects: frequency and amplitude in their transmission (**acoustic**).

## The Vocal Tract / Speech Organs and Articulators in the Vocal Tract
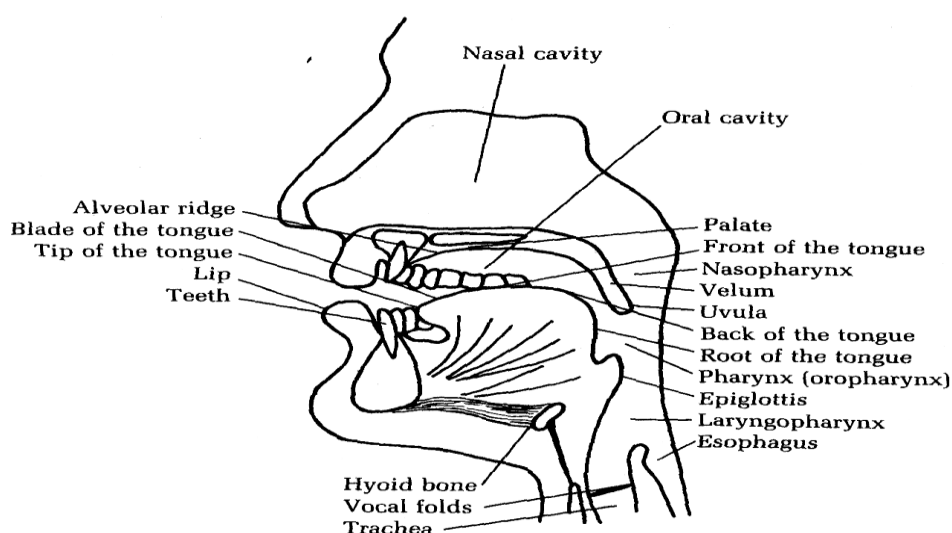


The **vocal tract** as shown in the above diagram is the part of our body through which air passes during speech. The vocal tract runs from the **lungs** up through

the **trachea** (or windpipe), through the **pharynx** (the space at the back of the mouth), and there it divides into the **oral cavity** (the space inside the mouth) and the **nasal cavity**; it reaches the outside world at the **lips** and at the **nostrils**.

As a general rule, during speech, air flows upwards and outwards through the vocal tract, though in certain less usual **airstream mechanisms** something different happens.

In the throat, the vocal tract passes through a complex structure called the **larynx**; within the larynx is an opening called the **glottis**, which can be opened wide to allow air to pass through freely, closed tight to block the flow of air, or closed loosely. In this last case, two bands of tissue called the **vocal folds** – between which the glottis is located – undergo **vibration**, and this produces **voicing**.

Between the oral cavity and the nasal cavity is a hinged flap of tissue called the **velum** (or '**soft palate**'); when the velum is raised, the nasal cavity is closed off, and no air can flow through it, but, when the velum is lowered, air can flow out through the nose.

Within the oral cavity, the size and shape of the vocal tract can be greatly varied, by raising or lowering the **jaw**, by moving the tongue around, and by altering the position of the lips. Whenever these movements are such as to greatly obstruct the flow of air, the resulting sound is a **consonant**; when the obstruction is minimal, the result is a **vowel**.

(Source from:

http://196.29.172.66:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/1774/1/KC%20language%20and%20linguistics.pdf  (p. 319) accessed on 10/9/2013)

To describe speech sounds, it is necessary to know what an individual sound is, and how each sound differs from all others. [Night and knight have four sounds even though the first sound in knight is represented by the two letters kn.]

Various phonetic alphabets have been developed to represent the speech sounds in writing through the use of **symbols**. Some of these symbols are identical to the Roman letters used in many language alphabets; for example: /p/ and /b/. Other symbols are based on the Greek alphabet, such as /θ/ to represent the th-sound in thin and thought. Still others have been especially invented / devised / created; e.g. /ð/ for the th- sound in *the*, and *then*.

The most widely used phonetic script is the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).** (see the chart of the International Phonetic Alphabet (revised to 2005) in the next page from the following source/web site:)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonetic_transcription accessed on 14/10/2013

Briefly speaking, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is one of the most popular and well-known phonetic alphabets. It was originally created by primarily British language teachers, with later efforts from European phoneticians and linguists. It has changed from its earlier intention as a tool of foreign language pedagogy to a practical alphabet of linguists. It is currently becoming the most often seen alphabet in the field of phonetics.

## THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)
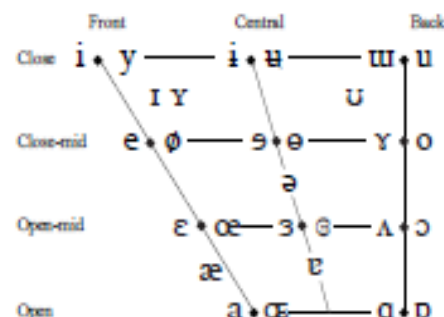
CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)
© 2005 IPA

| | Bilabial | Labiodental | Dental | Alveolar | Postalveolar | Retroflex | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyngeal | Glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plosive | p  b | | | t  d | | ʈ  ɖ | c  ɟ | k  ɡ | q  ɢ | | ʔ |
| Nasal | m | ɱ | | n | | ɳ | ɲ | ŋ | N | | |
| Trill | ʙ | | | r | | | | | R | | |
| Tap or Flap | | ⱱ | | ɾ | | ɽ | | | | | |
| Fricative | ɸ  β | f  v | θ  ð | s  z | ʃ  ʒ | ʂ  ʐ | ç  ʝ | x  ɣ | χ  ʁ | ħ  ʕ | h  ɦ |
| Lateral fricative | | | | ɬ  ɮ | | | | | | | |
| Approximant | | ʋ | | ɹ | | ɻ | j | ɰ | | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | | l | | ɭ | ʎ | L | | | |

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

| Clicks | Voiced implosives | Ejectives | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ʘ Bilabial | ɓ Bilabial | ' | Examples: |
| ǀ Dental | ɗ Dental/alveolar | p' | Bilabial |
| ǃ (Post)alveolar | ʄ Palatal | t' | Dental/alveolar |
| ǂ Palatoalveolar | ɠ Velar | k' | Velar |
| ǁ Alveolar lateral | ʛ Uvular | s' | Alveolar fricative |

OTHER SYMBOLS

ʍ Voiceless labial-velar fricative
w Voiced labial-velar approximant
ɥ Voiced labial-palatal approximant
ʜ Voiceless epiglottal fricative
ʢ Voiced epiglottal fricative
ʡ Epiglottal plosive

ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
ɺ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ɧ Simultaneous ʃ and x

Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.
k͡p  t͡s

VOWELS

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

| ' | Primary stress | ˌfoʊnə'tɪʃən |
| ˌ | Secondary stress | |
| ː | Long | eː |
| ˑ | Half-long | eˑ |
| ˘ | Extra-short | ĕ |
| \| | Minor (foot) group | |
| ‖ | Major (intonation) group | |
| . | Syllable break | ɹi.ækt |
| ‿ | Linking (absence of a break) | |

DIACRITICS   Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ŋ̊

| ̥ | Voiceless | n̥ d̥ | | ̤ | Breathy voiced | b̤ a̤ | | ̪ | Dental | t̪ d̪ |
| ̬ | Voiced | s̬ t̬ | | ̰ | Creaky voiced | b̰ a̰ | | ̺ | Apical | t̺ d̺ |
| ʰ | Aspirated | tʰ dʰ | | ̼ | Linguolabial | t̼ d̼ | | ̻ | Laminal | t̻ d̻ |
| ̹ | More rounded | ɔ̹ | | ʷ | Labialized | tʷ dʷ | | ̃ | Nasalized | ẽ |
| ̜ | Less rounded | ɔ̜ | | ʲ | Palatalized | tʲ dʲ | | ⁿ | Nasal release | dⁿ |
| ̟ | Advanced | u̟ | | ˠ | Velarized | tˠ dˠ | | ˡ | Lateral release | dˡ |
| ̠ | Retracted | e̠ | | ˤ | Pharyngealized | tˤ dˤ | | ̚ | No audible release | d̚ |
| ̈ | Centralized | ë | | ̴ | Velarized or pharyngealized | ɫ | | | | |
| ̽ | Mid-centralized | ë̽ | | ̝ | Raised | e̝ | (ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative) | | |
| ̩ | Syllabic | n̩ | | ̞ | Lowered | e̞ | (β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant) | | |
| ̯ | Non-syllabic | e̯ | | ̘ | Advanced Tongue Root | e̘ | | | |
| ˞ | Rhoticity | ɚ a˞ | | ̙ | Retracted Tongue Root | e̙ | | | |

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

| LEVEL | | CONTOUR | |
|---|---|---|---|
| e̋ or ˥ | Extra high | ě or ˇ | Rising |
| é or ˦ | High | ê or ˆ | Falling |
| ē or ˧ | Mid | e᷄ or ᷄ | High rising |
| è or ˨ | Low | e᷅ or ᷅ | Low rising |
| ȅ or ˩ | Extra low | e᷈ or ᷈ | Rising-falling |
| ↓ | Downstep | ↗ | Global rise |
| ↑ | Upstep | ↘ | Global fall |

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## Consonants

Consonants are formed by obstructing the flow of air from the lungs. As a first approximation, consonants vary in these dimensions:

1. **Place of articulation**-- where the obstruction occurs:
   - ➢ *labial*: lips (w), lips + teeth (f)
   - ➢ *dental*: teeth (th, French or Spanish t)
   - ➢ *alveolar*: behind the teeth (s, English t, Spanish r)
   - ➢ *palato-alveolar*: further back from the teeth (sh, American r)
   - ➢ *palatal*: top of palate (Russian ch)
   - ➢ *velar*: back of the mouth (k, ng)
   - ➢ *uvular*: way back in the mouth (Arabic q, French r)
   - ➢ *glottal*: back in the throat (h, glottal stop as in John Lennon saying bottle).

2. **Degree of closure.** This proceeds in steps
   - ❖ From *stops* (stopping the airflow entirely: p t k)
   - ❖ to *fricatives* (impeding it enough to cause audible friction: f s sh kh)
   - ❖ To *approximants* (barely impeding it: r l w y).
   - ❖ An *affricate* is a stop plus a fricative, which must occur at the same place of articulation: t + sh = ch, d + zh = j.

3. **Voicing**: whether the vocal cords are vibrating or not. That's the difference between f and v, t and d, k and g, sh and zh.

4. **Nasalization**: whether air travels through the nose as well as the mouth. For instance, m, n, and ng are stops like b, d, g, but only the oral airflow

is stopped.

5. **Aspiration**: whether stops are released lightly, or with a noticeable puff of air. In Chinese, Hindi, or Quechua, there are series of aspirated and non-aspirated stops.

6. **Palatalization**: whether the tongue is raised toward the top of the mouth while pronouncing the consonant. In Russian and Gaelic, there are distinct series of palatalized and non-palatalized consonants.

**Linguists** call the basic sounds of a language, the ones that can distinguish one word from another, **phonemes**, and the actual sounds as pronounced, **phones**. They'd say that English has a phoneme /p/, which has two phonetic realizations or **allophones**, aspirated [pʰ] and non-aspirated [p].

**Vowels**

The most important aspects of vowels are height and frontness.

1. **Height**: how open the inside of the mouth is. The usual scale is *high* [i, u], *mid* [e, o], and *low* [a]. There may be two middle steps in the ladder, usually called *closed* [ay, oh] and *open* [eh, aw].

2. **Frontness**: how close the tongue is to the front of the mouth. Vowels can be classified into *front* (i, e), *central* (a, or the indistinct vowel in 'of'), or *back* (o, u).

## IPA symbols for the sounds of English

The following is the chart for IPA symbols for the sounds of English consonants, short and long vowels as well as diphthongs with examples of English words given in a table below:

| IPA symbols for the sounds of English | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Consonants** | | **Short Vowels** | **Long Vowels** | **Diphthongs** |
| p . pip, pot | ʃ - ship | ɪ - bit, silly | iː - cream, seen | aɪ - spice, pie |
| b . bat, bug | ʒ - treasure, leisure | ɛ - bet, head | ɜː - burn, firm | ɛɪ - wait, fate |
| t . tell, table | h . hop, hut | æ . cat, dad | ɑː - hard, far | ɔɪ - toy, joy |
| d . dog, dig | tʃ - chip | ɒ - dog, rotten | ɔː - corn, faun | əʊ - oats, note |
| k . cat, key | dʒ - lodge, judge | ʌ - cut, nut | uː - boob, glue | aʊ - clown, vow |
| g . get, gum | m . man, mummy | ʊ - put, soot | | ɔə - bored, poured |
| f . fish, phone | n . man, pan | ə - about, clever | | ɪə - deer, pier |
| v . van, vat | ŋ . sing, wrong | | | ɛə - hair, bear |
| θ . thick, thump, faith | l . let, lips | | | ʊə - cure, |
| ð . these, there, smooth | r . rub, ran | | | |
| s . sat, sit | w . wait, worm | | | |
| z . zebra, zap | j . yet, yacht | | | |

The chart in the next page shows vowels and diphthongs used in standard varieties of English spoken in the USA, Australia, England, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Scotland and Wales.

|        | AmE    | AuE    | BrE    | CaE    | IrE    | NZE    | SAE    | ScE     | WeE    |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| ash    | æ:ʃ    | æʃ     | æʃ     | a:ʃ    | ɛʃ     | æːʃ    | æːʃ    | aʃ      | äʃ     |
| all    | ɑːɫ    | oːɫ    | ɔːɫ    | ɒːɫ    | ɔːɫ    | oːɫ    | ɔːɫ    | ɔːɫ     | ɔːɫ    |
| father | ˈfäðɚ  | ˈfäːðɐ | ˈfɑːðə | ˈfɑˑðɪ | ˈfäːðɚ | ˈfäːðɐ | ˈfɑˑðɐ̈ | ˈfäˑðɐɪ  | ˈfɑːðɐ |
| better | ˈbɛɾɚ  | ˈbɛɾɐ  | ˈbɛtə  | ˈbɛɾɪ  | ˈbɛtʔɐ̃  | ˈbɪɾɐ  | ˈbɛtɐ  | ˈbɛtʰəɪ  | ˈbɛtɐ  |
| day    | dɛ̝ɪ    | dɐɪ    | dɛ̝ɪ    | dɛ̝ɪ    | deː    | dɛɪ    | dɐ̝ȩ    | deː     | dɛ̝ɪ    |
| earth  | ɚˑθ    | ɜ̝ːθ    | ɜːθ    | ɚˑθ    | ɚˑθ    | ɞ̈ˑθ    | ɜ̝ˑθ    | ɛːɹθ    | ɞ̈ːθ    |
| drink  | dɹɪŋkʰ | dzɪŋk  | dɹɪŋkʰ | dɹɪŋkˀ | dɹïŋkʰ | dzɪŋk  | dɹɪŋkʰ | dɹɪŋkʰ  | dɹɪŋk  |
| eat    | iˑtʰ   | ɪit    | iˑtʰ   | iˑt    | it     | ɪit    | iˑtʰ   | iˑtʰ    | iˑt    |
| top    | tʰɑp   | tʰɒp   | tʰɔp   | tʰɒpˀ  | tʰɔːp  | tʰɒp   | tʰɒp   | tʰɔpʰ   | tʰɒp   |
| four   | foːɹ   | fɔː    | fɔː    | foːɹ   | foˑɚ   | fɔ̝ə    | fɔː    | foˑɐɪ    | fɔː    |
| foot   | fʊt    | fʊt    | fʊtʰ   | fʊt    | fʏt    | fʊt    | fʊtʰ   | fɐ̈tʰ    | fʊ̝t    |
| goose  | ɡuʊs   | ɡÿːs   | ɡuːs   | ɡɵʊs   | ɡʏs    | ɡʉːs   | ɡʉːs   | ɡʉs     | ɡuːs   |
| blood  | blʌd   | blɐ̝d   | blɐ̝d   | blɤ̈d   | blʌd   | blɐ̝d   | blɐ̝d   | blɤ̈d    | blɐd   |
| bone   | bʌˑʊn  | bɵʉn   | bɐ̝ʊn   | boʊn   | boːn   | bɞ̝ʉn   | bɜʉn   | boən    | boːn   |
| cow    | kʰæʊ   | kʰæʊ   | kʰaʊ   | kʰaʊ   | kʰɛʏ    | kʰaʊ   | kʰɐ̝ɞ̈   | k̝ʰɐʊˑ   | kʰɐʊˑ  |
| nail   | neˑɫ̈   | nɐɪɐɫ  | nɛ̝ɪɫ   | neˑəl  | neˑəɫ  | nɛɪʊ   | neˑəɫ  | neˑɫ̈    | neːl   |
| bite   | bäitʰ  | bäɪt   | bäɪtʰ  | bʌɪt   | bɐit   | bäɪt   | bäetʰ  | bɐ̈ɪitʰ  | bɐit   |
| ear    | iˑɚ    | iˑɐ    | ɪɹə    | iˑɪ̥    | iˑɚ    | iˑɞ̈    | iɞ̈ˑ    | iˑɐɪ    | jɞ̈ː    |

**Abbreviation-Key:** AmE = American English (General American), AuE = Australian English, BrE = British English (RP), CaE = Canadian English, IrE = Irish English, NZE = New Zealand English, SAE = South African English, ScE = Scottish English, WeE = Welsh English

**(Source from:** www.omniglot.com/English language/alphabet and pronunciation.htm accessed on 2/11/2013)

There is significant variation in the vowel sounds used within most of these countries, and in other countries where English is spoken.

## Phonology:

Phonology is the term used for the study of the speech sounds used in a particular language like English or Arabic. The distinctive accents that many (Yemeni Arab) learners of English have are due to differences between the phonological system of their language and that of English. From birth, and possibly before, we learn to recognize and produce the distinctive sounds of our own language. We do not need to give any thought to how to have the lips, tongue, teeth, etc. working together to produce the desired sounds. The physical structures of parts of the sound system are adapted to produce native-language sounds. (see: http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/langdiff/Arabic.htm (28/10/2013))

In other words, phonology refers either to the representation of the sounds and sound patterns in a speaker's mental grammar, or to the study of the sound patterns in a language or in human language in general. Let have a look at the following section.

A **phoneme** is the smallest unit in the sound system of a human language; for example, the phoneme /t/ or the /t/ sounds in the English words: tea, data and plant, the vowels /e/ and /a/ are also phonemes in words such as set and sat. **Phonemes** are the sounds that make up a language. These are the smallest distinctive and meaningful units which mean different things when sounds form words. For example, in English, we can tell this from the units such as /h/ and /m/, when substituted for the other can change in meaning (as in hat ~ mat).

## Syllables

Phonology does not only describe a system of sounds in isolation, but it also

deals with the rules and restrictions that hold for their combinations. This branch of phonology is called **phonotactics**. Phones combine into the **syllable**, which is essentially a vowel with optional consonants clustered around it. The vowel forms the **nucleus** of a syllable, with the onset in front of it and the coda behind it. Depending on whether there is a coda or not, a syllable can be described as either **closed** or **open**. The basic form of the English syllable is (CCC) V (CCCC), i.e. *I*, *spray*, or *texts* are all examples of one syllable but of different complexity.

## Prosody

Prosody belongs to the domain of supra-segmental phonology in that it describes phenomena extending over more than one phoneme. The phenomena that belong here are **stress**, **rhythm**, and **intonation**. While **stress** can be word or sentence stress, **rhythm** and **intonation** occur in phrases and sentences. **Intonation** is described by reference to **pitch** (tones); different levels of pitch are used to express a wide range of meanings: for example, we use the difference between a falling and a rising pitch pattern in statements and questions.

## Arabic Phonology:

## Arabic Consonants

The Arabic phonetic inventory consists of 28 different consonants. However, due to the variation in dialects, many of the consonants are produced with emphatic stress and non- emphatic stress. Emphatic stress refers to the

production of consonants that are produced with the back of the tongue approaching the pharynx. Interestingly, the most frequently used consonant phoneme in the Arabic language is /r/. (Watson, 2002)

## ARABIC PHONEMIC INVENTORY

*Please remember that dialectal differences exist for each language and should be considered when using the phonemic charts.*

| | Bilabial | Labiodental | Dental | Alveolar | Postalveolar | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyngeal | Glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plosive | b | | | t d<br>t̪ d̪ | | | k | q | | ʔ |
| Nasal | m | | | n | | | | | | |
| Trill | | | | r | | | | | | |
| Tap or Flap | | | | ɾ | | | | | | |
| Fricative | | f | θ ð<br>ð̪ | s z<br>s̪ | ʃ | | | χ ʁ | ħ ʕ | h |
| Affricate | | | | | dʒ | | | | | |
| Glides (Approximant) | w | | | | | j | | | | |
| Liquid (Lateral Approximant) | | | | l | | | | | | |

/t̪/, /d̪/, /s̪/, and /ð̪/ reflect emphatic consonants. According to IPA guidelines, these emphatic consonants may be transcribed as /tˁ/, /dˁ/, /sˁ/, /ðˁ/.

Reference:
Amayreh, M. (2003). Completion of the Consonant Inventory of Arabic. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 46,* 517–529.
Amayreh, M., & Dyson, A. (1998). The acquisition of Arabic consonants. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 41,* 642–653.
Saleem, A., & Dyson, A. (2003, November). *Arabic Preschool Phonological Screening Test—Revised (APPST–R).* Poster session presented at 2003 Annual Convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Chicago.

## Arabic Vowels

There are three basic vowels, /a, i, u/ which can be produced either in a long or short form. Like consonants, vowel productions vary among different dialects. Short vowels have little significance in Arabic; they are often omitted or confused when Arabic speakers attempt to learn English. Short vowels that are frequently confused are: /i/ for /e/ (bit for bet), /ei/ for /e/ (raid for red), /ou/ for

/a/ (hope for hop). Since many consonant clusters seen in the English language do not occur in Arabic, individuals who are Arabic-English speakers, typically add short vowels into the cluster (e.g. spiring for spring). Distinction between long and short vowels in pronunciation is important because many words consist of minimal pairs and are exclusively distinguished by vowel length. (Battle, 2002, Watson, 2002)

Similarly, stress patterns are influenced by syllable/vowel length (Most, T. et al 2008). For example:

- Only one of the last three syllables may be stressed
- For this scenario, the last "super-heavy" syllable that contains a long vowel or ending in a consonant is stressed.
- If there is no such syllable, the pre-final syllable is stressed if it is "heavy." Otherwise, the first allowable syllable is stressed.
- In Standard Arabic, a final long vowel may not be stressed. (This restriction does not apply to the spoken dialects, where original final long vowels have been shortened and secondary final long vowels have arisen).

All above from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_language 30/09/2014

Other features that might be observed with individuals who speak Arabic and English is over exaggerated articulation with equal stress on all syllables. Spelling issues may also be present in Arabic-English speakers. Words are phonetically spelled in Arabic, which causes individuals to spell English words phonetically. (Battle, 2002)

## Some differences between English and Arabic in Phonetics and Phonology

Arabic is the official language in many countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, (Yemen) and Morocco. Arabic is also the language of the Koran/Quran, so Muslims of all nationalities, such as Indonesians, are familiar with it. There are many Arabic dialects, but there is one version that is taught in schools and used by the media across the Arab world.

Arabic is from the Semitic language family, hence its **grammar** (phonology, morphology and Syntax) is very different from English. There is a large potential for errors of interference when Arab learners produce written or spoken English. Arabic has a three consonant root as its basis. All words (parts of speech) are formed by combining the three-root consonants with fixed vowel patterns and, sometimes, an affix. Arab learners may be confused by the lack of patterns in English that would allow them to distinguish the structure of nouns from verbs or adjectives, etc., as well as the structure of different sentences in both English and Arabic.

This is will be dealt with in the next semester, second semester in your course entitled **Introduction to Language II** that will be devoted to some aspects of Morphology and Syntax that in turn will be given for the 3rd Year B.Ed. English Students in the 1st semester.

**Alphabetically**, Arabic language has a Consonantal Alphabet or what is known as Abgad / Abjad alphabet, written in the Naskhi script. The letters of this alphabet are of the Semitic language family. Arabic has 28 consonants (English 24) and 8 vowels/diphthongs (English 20). Short vowels are unimportant in

Arabic, and indeed do not appear in writing. Texts are read from right to left and written in a cursive script. Numerals are written left to right. No distinction is made between upper and lower case, and the rules for punctuation are much looser than in English.

Arabic doesn't have letters for vowels. However, there is a system to marking vowels. Short vowels are represented by diacritics above or below a letter (see below). Long vowels are represented by using the short-vowel diacritics plus the letters alif, waaw, and yaa to represent the sounds [aa], [uu], and [ii], respectively.

In addition to the vowel markers, Arabic also has several other diacritics. The hamzah or alif, which looks like C, denotes the glottal stop (the letter alif used to represent the glottal stop, but has become more of a placeholder for vowel-initial words). Finally, the diacritic shaddah (=germination) , which represents the doubling of a consonant like /dd/ in shaddah.

Naturally, these important differences between the Arabic and English writing systems cause Arab learners significant problems. They usually need much more time to read or write than their English-learning peers from the Indo-European language families.

In **English phonetics** we describe consonants according to three criteria which are place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing. According to the place of articulation, English consonants are divided into eight groups which are: bilabials, labio-dentals, dentals, alveolars, platao-alveolars, palatals, velars and glottals. But according to the manner of articulation English sounds are divided into six groups which are: stops, fricatives, affricates, nasals, lateral and

approximants. English vowel sounds are described according to three criteria which are: **frontness- backness**, **closeness-openness**, and **lip-rounding**.

The following is the chart for English Consonants:

|  | bilabial | labiodental | dental | alveolar | postalveolar | retroflex | palatal | Velar | glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| plosive | p  b |  |  | t  d |  |  |  | k  g |  |
| nasal |  m |  |  | n |  |  |  | ŋ |  |
| fricative |  | F  v | Θ  ð | s  z | ʃ  ʒ |  |  |  | h |
| approximant | (w) |  |  |  |  | ɹ | j | (w) |  |
| lateral approximant |  |  |  | L |  |  |  |  |  |
| affricate |  |  |  |  | tʃ  dʒ |  |  |  |  |

The following is the chart for English Vowels:
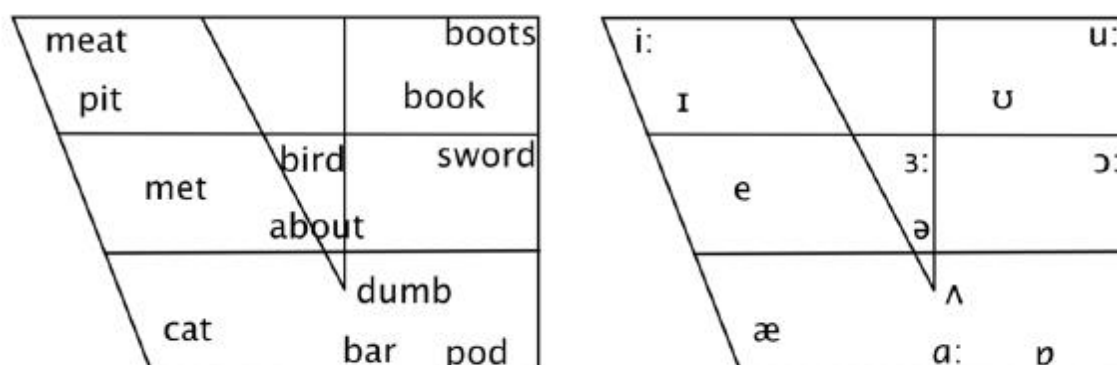


In contrast, in **Arabic phonetics** we describe sounds according to ten criteria which are: bilabials, labiodentals, dentals, interdentals, alveolars, palatals, velars, uvulars, pharyngeals and glottals. Each group has many characteristics such as deep, soft, whispered, magnified, delicate, sonorous, nasal, curved, and trill. The following is the chart for Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) Consonants:

| MSA Consonants | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Labial | Emphatic [2] | | **Plain** | | Palato-alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyngeal/ Epiglottal | Glottal |
| | | | Dental | Alveolar | Alveolar | Dental | | | | | | |
| Nasal | | m | | | n | | | | | | | |
| Stop | voiceless | (p) [8] | tˤ [4] | | t [9] | | | | k | q | | ʔ |
| | voiced | b | dˤ [4] | | d [9] | | d͡ʒ~ʒ~ɟ~ɡ [1] | | | | | |
| Fricative | voiced | (v) [8] | ðˤ~zˤ | | z | ð | | | ɣ~ʁ [5] | | ʕ~ʢ [3] | |
| | voiceless | f | | sˤ | s | θ | ʃ | | x~χ [5] | | ħ~ʜ [3] | h |
| Approximant | | w | | ɫ~l [6] | | | | j | | | | |
| Trill | | | | rˤ~r [7] | | | | | | | | |

There are some similarities and differences between the two systems, we have nineteen common consonants in both English and Arabic such as/b/, /t/,/d/,/θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /f/, /z/, /s/, /h/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /r/,/k/,  /g /, / q/, /w/, and /y/.There are ten consonants restricted to Arabic such as "emphatic" /tˤ, dˤ, sˤ, ðˤ/ (ط,ص,ض,ظ), /x/ and /ɣ/ (خ,غ) are often post-velar, though velar and uvular pronunciations are also possible In many varieties, /ħ, ʕ/ (ح,ع) are actually epiglottal [ʜ, ʢ] (despite what is reported in many earlier works). /ʔ/ and there are consonants restricted to English such as /p/, /g/, /tʃ/, /v/, / ʒ / and /dʒ/. A glottal stop /ʔ/ is the emphasis of a vowel at the beginning of a word or syllable. It is common in some English dialects and mocked as typical of the uneducated, lower class. As an example imagine saying the word 'butter' without saying the 't' sound. The glottal stop occurs on the production of the second syllable: 'er'.

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In Arabic phonetics there are **eight** vowels three of them are common to both English and Arabic such as /a, i, u/. Four of them are restricted to English such as /e, æ, ə/. Only one vowel is restricted to Arabic which is the long vowel /a: /. The following is the chart for Arabic short and long vowels as well as diphthongs with examples of Arabic words given in a table below:
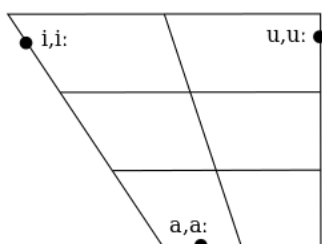


**Short vowels of Arabic /a i u/ and long vowels of Arabic /a: i: u: or aa ii uu/**
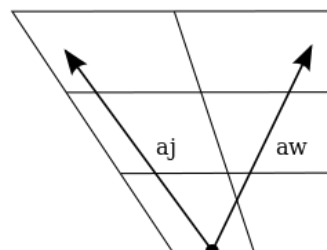


**Diphthongs of Arabic aj/ay and aw**

| Example of Arabic Words | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short Vowels** | | | **Long Vowels** | | | **Diphthongs** | | |
| **i** | عِد /ʕidd/ | Promise | **i: or ii** | عِيد /ʕi:d/ | Feast | **aj or ay** | عَيْن /ʕajn/ | Eye |
| **u** | عُد /ʕudd/ | come back! | **u: or uu** | عُود /ʕu:d/ | Lute | aw | عَوْد /ʕawd/ | Return |
| **a** | عَد /ʕadd/ | Counted | **a: or aa** | عَاد /ʕa:d/ | came back | | | |

In **Phonology**, English has about three times as many vowel sounds as Arabic, so it is inevitable/inescapable that beginning learners will fail to distinguish between some of the words they hear, such as bad / pad or, ship / sheep and will have difficulties saying such words correctly.

The **word stress** is regular in Arabic. It is common, therefore, for (Yemeni) Arab learners to have difficulties with the apparently random nature of English stress patterns. For example, the word yesterday is stressed on the first syllable

and tomorrow on the second. Unlike English, Arabic language depends primarily on **tone** not pitch.

There are some sound placements that are different between English and Arabic Problems in pronouncing consonants include the inability to produce the sounds in words such as this and thin, the swapping/substituting of /b/ and /p/ at the beginning of words, and the substitution of /f/ for /v/. Consonant clusters, such as in the words split or lengths, also cause problems and often result in the speaker adding an extra vowel: spilit or lengthes.

The elision (or swallowing) of sounds that is so common in spoken English is problematic for Arab speakers, and they will often resist it (for example, "Do you know her?"-"Jew know her?"). This dislike to elision and the use of glottal stops* before initial vowels are the primary reasons for the typical staccato quality of the spoken English of Arab learners.

The following table provides some examples of MSA and TYA words (nouns and adjectives) with corresponding English words:

| MSA word | TYA    word | English Word |
|----------|-------------|--------------|
| kitaab   | ktaabu      | Book         |
| daftar   | daftaru     | Copybook     |
| barmiil  | barmiilu    | Barrel       |
| bayt     | beetu       | House        |
| sawq     | sooqu       | Market       |
| maxadda  | mxaddeh     | Pillow       |
| dawle    | Dooleh      | Country      |
| dabbaasa | dabbaase    | Stabler      |
| bint     | bittu       | Girl         |
| θuʕbaan  | Hanašu      | Snake        |
| kabiir   | kabiiru     | Big          |

| gadiid | gdiidu | New |
|--------|--------|-----|
| raaqid | raagdu | Asleep |
| magnuun | magnuunu | Crazy |
| muxliS | muxlSu | Faithful |

The post final vowel /u/ as a pausal /u/ is a general TYA linguistic feature. (See Shaghi, Abdullah M. M. and Imtiaz Hasanain (2009) and Shaghi, Abdullah M. M. (2010) for more details.

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